

Authenticity, Autonomy, and Enhancement

Pei-hua Huang
Independent Researcher
ph.huang@cantab.net

Autenticidad, autonomía y mejora

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to provide a clarification of the long debate on whether enhancement will or will not diminish authenticity. It focuses particularly on accounts provided by Carl Elliott and David DeGrazia. Three clarifications will be presented here. First, most discussants only criticise Elliott's identity argument and neglect that his conservative position in the use of enhancement can be understood as a concern over social coercion. Second, Elliott's and DeGrazia's views can, not only co-exist, but even converge together as an autonomy based theory of authenticity. Third, the current account of autonomy provided by DeGrazia fails to address the importance of rationality and the ability of self-correction, which, as a result impedes the theory to provide a fully developed account for authenticity. In conclusion, a satisfactory account of authenticity cannot focus only on identity or subjective preference.

RESUMEN: El objetivo de este trabajo es clarificar el debate sobre si la mejora disminuye o no la autenticidad. Se centra de modo especial en las versiones ofrecidas por Carl Elliott y David DeGrazia, y se presentan tres clarificaciones. En primer lugar, la mayoría de los participantes en el debate sólo critican el argumento sobre la identidad de Elliott y no tienen en cuenta que su postura conservadora en relación al uso de mejoras puede entenderse como una preocupación por la coerción social. En segundo lugar, los puntos de vista de Elliott y DeGrazia no solo pueden co-existir, sino incluso converger en una teoría de la autenticidad basada en la autonomía. En tercer lugar, la versión de la autonomía actualmente ofrecida por DeGrazia desatiende la importancia de la racionalidad y la capacidad de auto-corrección, lo que supone un impedimento para desarrollar una teoría que proporcione una comprensión plenamente desarrollada de la autenticidad. Como conclusión, se afirmará que una explicación satisfactoria de la autenticidad no puede centrarse en exclusiva en la identidad o en las preferencias subjetivas.

KEYWORDS: authenticity, autonomy, human enhancement

PALABRAS-CLAVE: autenticidad, autonomía, mejora humana

Introduction

Contemporary discussions about authenticity could be traced back to Charles Taylor's *The Ethics of Authenticity*, in which he publicly announced his worry that authenticity could be diminished by utilitarian calculations. Although recent debates over authenticity do not focus on the role that utilitarianism plays in modern society, it more or less shared the concern that certain practices could pose great threat to authenticity. Carl Elliott's widely cited work, *Better than well*, echoes Taylor's worry, arguing that the use of enhancement is detrimental to authenticity. One major reason for Elliott to highlight the problem of enhancement is that enhancement may not really enhance a person, but replace the person's authentic self with bogusness.

Current discussions (Bolt, 2007; DeGrazia, 2000; Levy, 2011) about authenticity, then, shift to the debate of whether or not identity is important. Elliott insists that identity is crucial for one to be authentic, which implies that authenticity can only be achieved by self-discovery, a practice of self-reflection without the help of enhancement. Nevertheless, David DeGrazia



contains that identity is secondary in the issue of authenticity. Authenticity is fulfilled, according to DeGrazia, out of self-creation. One shall be free to pursue her ideal, even if it will involve the use of enhancement and dramatic changes in the person's personality or physical appearance. The self-discovery and self-creation view are often labeled as two rivalry accounts that cannot co-exist.

Yet, here in this paper, I will try to approach this issue from a different angle. I will first deal with the issue of identity. I will provide an examination on Elliott's identity argument and then point out that this argument has several problems that may not be solved easily. I will then point out that Elliott could actually abandon his identity argument and focus on concerns over the social coercion he mentioned in his work. Despite that, most discussants, including Elliott himself, neglect the problem of social coercion, it is what makes certain enhancement morally susceptible. After this clarification is made, I will then move on to argue that Elliott's and DeGrazia's position are not so different that the two cannot hold in the same time. Rather, once the identity argument is abandoned, the two will be almost identical, for they both pay great attention on autonomy. Nevertheless, the convergence also means that the two accounts share certain flaws together, *i.e.*, the negligence of the importance of rationality. Autonomy, according to the two accounts, is defined mainly by subjective preference. The importance of rationality and ability of self-correction are missing in the discussion. The paper will end with a conclusion that to provide a fuller account of authenticity, autonomy and rationality are the keys, rather than the technology one employs and subjective preference one possesses.

1. Elliott's Identity Argument and Two Types of Intervention

One of the major reasons for philosophers to interpret Elliott's position in the quest for authenticity as enhancement conservative is the emphasis he puts on identity. Elliott contends that the effects introduced by enhancement can never help one to be better because enhancement will change the identity of the enhanced. I shall label this account as *the identity argument*:

It would be worrying if Prozac altered my personality, even if it gave me a better personality, simply because it *isn't* my personality. This kind of personality change seems to defy an ethics of authenticity (Elliott, 1998, p. 182).

Elliott invites us to imagine a gloomy accountant who is unhappy about his life and complains that "Jesus Christ, is this it? A Snapper lawn mower and a house in the suburbs?" (Elliott, 2000, p. 180). He uses this accountant to highlight the point that, according to the identity argument, even though taking Prozac may alleviate the discontent of the accountant from both the first-person and the third-person point of view, the so-called *improvement* does not truly improve the accountant. The improved mood, no matter how positive it is, is not the *true* mood that the accountant possesses. In other words, Prozac does not solve the accountant's personal issue at all. It only introduces a new person, who sees the Snapper lawn mower and a house in the suburbs with satisfaction, to replace the unhappy middle-aged man. Elliott suggests that it would be better for the accountant to remain unhappy since the accountant can maintain his identity, and realise there is a gap between his current life and the life he truly wants to have.

However, an important notion Elliott adopts for his identity argument has not been given a clear definition. That is, the inner self (sometimes interchangeable with the inner voice). All we can learn from his work is that the inner self he uses does not need to be interpreted with an essentialist's view:

"To many people, the phrase 'authentic self' brought to mind a core of identity whose attributes are fixed and immutable, casted in childhood and hardened by adulthood, stable and unwavering no matter who or what circumstances a person might encounter...you can buy into the idea of *an authentic self* without buying into the idea of *an essentialist self*." (Elliott, 2004, pp. 48-49, my italics)

What exactly this assertion can give to us in the debate of the use of enhancement and the quest for authenticity, nevertheless, remains unclear in his work. If one's inner self is mutable, how can we establish an account for his identity argument, for instance? What makes a mutation free of the charge of altering the inner self while the other culpable?

This difficulty could be resolved once Elliott adopts a distinction among different types of interventions: those that trigger alteration, and those that engender development. In the defence of the authentic self, Elliott seems to tacitly use this distinction to argue that change of the authentic self introduced by conventional practices such as education or group therapy does not pose threats to one's identity because it only helps a person to *develop* her inner self. On the contrary, the use of enhance-

ment *alters* the inner self. For Elliott, the enhancers that work in accordance with their chemical mechanisms designed by scientists, do not aim to help one's given talents or temperament flourish. Instead, they introduce external influences that cover or even replace one's inner self with features that do not belong to the enhancement receivers. This defence is fairly straightforward and is presumed to save Elliott's identity argument from the accusation of being ambivalent.

2. Suspiciousness of the Value of the Inner Self

However, although the distinction between development and alteration could explain why the change introduced by enhancement such as Prozac is problematic for Elliott, unfortunately, this clarification cannot resolve all the difficulties Elliott's identity argument has.

First, it is unclear why we should praise and try to preserve the inner self. There are values other than 'remaining true to oneself' that are cherished by most people. Though the so-called inner self, or the true self, can serve as a basis for us to testify whether we are living in a life that is not full of self-deception, the inner self is not always benign. Despite the rarity of this example, our inner self may be that of a psychopath who loves to kill or torture. It seems to contradict to our intuition that people who are born to be 'less moral' should try any means to change themselves. This indicates that it is not intrinsically good for one to remain identical to her inner self.

One possible response that Elliott may use to answer this challenge is that the psychopathic or the less moral self is not the real self, but a malfunctioning self. Elliot may revise his view into that 'being authentic is that one lives in accordance with his or her "normal functioning inner self."' If one is born with mental disorder, we should try to adopt medical intervention to restore his or her mental health to the normal function. He may argue that, unless these people receive appropriate treatment, they will not be able to discover the true self that can provide them the guidance towards an authentic life.

How to distinguish the normal and the abnormal, nevertheless, is very difficult. Many (Fukuyama, 2002; Sandel, 2007) appeal to the concept of human nature to set the boundary for treatment, because they believe human nature can tell us

what sort of property a normal human being should have. Yet, this approach has drawn numerous attacks. (Buchanan, 2009; Hull, 1986; Lewens, 2012). In short, according to our current understanding of biology, the heterogeneity of behaviors observed among human populations is too diverse to permit us to describe a single set of archetypal human behaviors with any confidence. As human behaviour has changed exceptionally fast over the past few thousand years relative to other species, it is impossible to describe an immutable account of human nature.

The diversity of mankind, though highly praised by biologists, also causes great problems for bioethicists who would love to argue that there is a natural or objective distinction between the normal and the abnormal, hence enhancement and treatment. In a research paper, Simonson et al. (2010) found the genetic basis for Tibetan's distinctive suite of physiological traits which enable Tibetans to live in low oxygen conditions. The evolutionary process may be traced back to 7,000 to 5,000 years ago, when a group of people started to occupy the Tibetan Plateau during the mid-Holocene (Su et al., 2000). Within in 10,000 years, Tibetans had soon evolved many physiological traits that enabled them to live in such a harsh environment. These particular traits, according to current studies, are so unique that they could not even be found in the neighboring Han Chinese and the other lowland peoples (Chen et al., 1997; Erzurum et al., 2007).

Now, let us consider the following scenario. Suppose that C is a Caucasian athlete who specialises in ultra-marathons and whose current endurance in low oxygen conditions is not as good as the average modern Tibetan. He wants to be successful in his career and therefore tries to use contemporary technology to improve his physiological functions that are relevant to low oxygen condition endurance. Into which category should we classify his attempt, treatment or enhancement? If we compare C's functions with modern Tibetans, we probably will have to say that the intervention C imposes on himself is a treatment for it merely raises his functions to the level of those of average Tibetans. Nevertheless, some may argue that C shall only compare his physiological fitness with other Caucasians and therefore this attempt should be regarded as enhancement. Setting this sort of reference group seems to show that the so-called human nature cannot give us an objective and value-free definition of the normal function of *homo sapiens*. Rather, the result of the attempt demonstrates how humans evaluate themselves.¹

3. Perplexity of the Originality of Alteration

Apart from the notion of the inner self, the implicitly posited distinction of alteration and development is also questionable. As I have shown before, the distinction is crucial for Elliott if he intends to preserve his position that, though the inner self could be mutable, the change introduced by enhancement is unacceptable. Nevertheless, how to distinguish interventions that trigger development of the self from those that introduce alteration and replacement is something that he left without fuller explanation.

Education, for instance, could be a hard case for this distinction. In a longitudinal study, Schlaug et al. (2005) showed that music training could influence children's brain activities, according to the analysis of fMRI data collected by the team. The data of this study also suggested that music training can enhance visual-spatial, verbal, and mathematical performance, though the underlying mechanism remained unclear. In another study, M. K. Chen (2013) shows that languages we acquire may influence our inter-temporal decision-making. He found languages that grammatically associate the future and the present foster future-oriented behavior. Users of these sorts of languages tend to save money more than those who speak languages that do not possess this feature. The discovery of these universal effects demonstrates that even conventional education tends to reduce individual's mental idiosyncrasies and variations. could function as a die and shape us into persons sharing similar characteristics, erasing our uniqueness. Influence they pose onto a person could also be more significant than Prozac or Ritalin as the studies suggest because the introduced effect is not even reversible.

Introducing the distinction of bio-medical and non-bio-medical helps little in this case, too. Elliott may argue that the influence from education is non-bio-chemical and therefore will not alter one's identity. Yet, if we adopt the view that bio-medical interventions poses a threat to authenticity, we are arguing that aspirin, caffeine and other similar substances that are widely used in our daily life are equally a threat to authenticity. Besides, if it is the mechanism behind the change of one's self that bothers Elliott, technological innovation could undermine his worry completely in the future, too. Though the scenario is unlikely to occur in the near future, we can imagine that a group of scientists invent a new generation of anti-depressant whose effect will take place in the exactly same way that a talk therapy is going to introduce to a hu-

man brain. Suppose that such an anti-depressant is invented and could improve the moods of people like the unhappy accountant described in Elliott's work, should we label the change it introduces as an alteration even if the effect it has and the change it imposes on human brains are exactly the same as talk therapy? There would probably be more hard cases for the bio-enhancement conservatives who focus only on the means one employed for the intervention in the future.²

4. Elliott's Real Concern: Enhancement as a means of Coercion

Most discussions on Elliott's position in enhancement and authenticity end with challenges they raised for his identity account (*cf.* Bolt (2007); DeGrazia (2005)) and conclude that Elliott's argument can never be a successful defender of the enhancement conservative position. They fail to notice that Elliott's main concern could actually be saved without the help of his identity argument. Charles Taylor's words cited in Elliott's work show us that, besides identity, there is another angle to approach the issue of authenticity. That is, the ever-interacting relationship between an individual and his surroundings. Taylor once contends that the discovery of one's identity is like a dialogue. Interlocutors in the dialogue include both the selves that dwell in our mind and the selves of other people we encounter in the external world. The quest of authenticity is never a quest in isolation, but a quest that is full of interactions (Taylor, 1991, p. 48) The chief task of the journey to authenticity, thus, is preventing dependence on or *submission* to others. It indicates that the real threat against authenticity is not the use of enhancement but social coercion. Many people attempt to use enhancement because they want to fulfill the expectations of others, which in turn makes enhancement coercive and against one's true wishes.

Shifting the focus to social coercion explains Elliott's seemingly ambivalent attitude about his identity argument when it comes to certain radical interventions, *e.g.*, sex reassignment surgery and blepharoplasty (cosmetic eye surgery). Sex reassignment surgery and blepharoplasty, if we focus only on the procedure, are essentially cosmetic surgery. Cosmetic surgery is widely seen as a form of enhancement for it is often not conducted out of the concern of health, and, without the patient's request, surgeons normally would not perform either of the surgeries to their patients. Nevertheless, Elliott's attitude towards the two types of surgery is fairly

different. Concerning the case that many transsexuals struggle with the idea that whether they should receive sex reassignment surgery, Elliott wrote:

"... today you must listen to the voice within you. The crowd might *drown out* the inner voice; you might find it difficult to hear because of all the other voices that are shouting all around you. But listening to it is crucial, because only that inner voice can tell you *the person you are to be* and *the way you are to live*." (Elliott, 2004, p. 33, my italics)

Whereas, when it comes to the practice of blepharoplasty, he decries that:

"...the problem with cosmetic surgery is not just racism or sexism, not just a matter of unjust ideology; it is also an ethos in which the opinions of other people...have taken on such enormous significance" (Elliott, 2004, p. 203)

Despite the fact that sex reassignment surgery in general causes greater changes and has higher health risks to a person than blepharoplasty does, Elliott encourages transsexuals passionately to ignore the mainstream ideology that one's gender identity should correspond to the sex he or she was born with and receive the surgery to fulfill their ideals. Yet, when it comes to blepharoplasty, he blames the practice as a conformity of unjust ideology. His attitude towards the two types of cosmetic surgery implies that what makes the use of some enhancements problematic is not about that of the practices themselves, but that the desire to seek the help from enhancement is often due to social coercion. Elliott's stress on self-discovery and the value of inner self shall, as a result, be seen as an admonishment that every attempt to change oneself, regardless of whether it is done via bio-medical or conventional means, moderate or radical intervention, has to be based on one's true wish, instead of the confusing mainstream ideology.³

5. Convergence of the Two Rivalry Accounts of Authenticity

Reading Elliott's words in this way shows that his position can be converged into the so-called self-creation account of authenticity advanced by David DeGrazia. Many often see the two approaches as incompatible, including Elliott and DeGrazia themselves, because DeGrazia labels his account as self-creation, rather than self-discovery. Nevertheless, self-discovery does not, as a result, become dispensable to DeGrazia's account, and self-creation is not therefore meaningless for Elliott as we can see from the case of sex reassignment surgery.

Further examinations on work of the two sides show that their views about authenticity can actually converge with each other. For instance, one of the most serious problems that we have in the modern society, according to Elliott, is that many people do not know why they would like to pursue particular enhancements. (2004, p. 188). As people can easily be blinded with the desire to receive positive recognition from others, self-discovery highlights the importance of clarifying what they would really want to have. Without this crucial step, the so-called self-creation philosophy could be mere conformity to the social norm. In fact, DeGrazia has noticed this potential problem for the project of self-creation. Although he does not use the term, self-discovery, the notion he adopts for his self-creation account shares the same spirit, *i.e.*, autonomy. Unlike the Frankfurt-Dworkin hierarchical account of autonomy, he stresses more on the identification of subjective preference. In the standard version of the hierarchical account, whether an action is autonomous or not is decided by the relationship among desires of different orders. According to the account, the first-order desire is the desire to conduct certain acts in certain ways, *e.g.*, the desire to drink. The second-order desire, unlike the first-order desire, is not directly about the action itself but about 'the desire to conduct certain actions.' In theory, one could have desires higher above the second-order desire as one keeps introspecting on his desires. With orders of desires, the hierarchical account distinguishes autonomous action from non-autonomous actions by examining whether lower-order desire and higher-order desire conflict with each other or not.. Take addiction as an example. A person who is influenced by addiction is not really autonomous if her first-order desire of taking more drugs is in a confliction with her second-order desire that she should not *desire* to desire to take the drug. Yet, for DeGrazia, whether lower-order desire is in a confliction with higher-order desires is not the most crucial factor for one to behave autonomously. Rather, the most crucial criterion is that the desire (in DeGrazia's work he uses preference instead) of an agent to conduct an action cannot be from an alienating influence:

A autonomously performs intentional action A if and only if (1) A does A because she prefers to do X, (2) A has this preference because she (at least dispositionally) identifies with and prefers to have it, and (3) this identification has not resulted primarily from influences that A would, on careful reflection, consider alienating. (DeGrazia, 2005, p. 102, italics in origin)

The definition of autonomy articulated by DeGrazia echoes Elliott's view that one has to be aware of the possibility that her desire to conduct a certain action is not what

she genuinely would like to have. The desire could be formed by an external influence that is alienating. Constant vigilance is an essential task for one to embark on self-discovery and self-creation. Due to the emphasis on the identification of personal preference, I shall call this account *preference-identification account of autonomy*.

6. Advantages and Limitation of the Preference-identification Account of Autonomy

One of the major advantages that DeGrazia's preference-identification account can provide to the investigation of authenticity is that it could avoid listing desires that are formed out of coercion as authentic desires. Irving Thalberg (1978) points out that under certain situations, one could be so frightened that she simply could not have a higher-order desire that fights against her first-order desire of submission. For instance, when being pointed by a gunpoint, most people would not have a higher-order desire that tells them not to follow the aggressor's instruction. Since there is no higher-order desire that conflicts with the first-order desire of following the aggressor's instruction, according to the traditional hierarchical account of autonomy, the submission would be regarded as autonomous, even though few of us would see the desire to succumb in this sort of circumstance as a reflection of our true voice.

The brilliance of the preference-identification account is the way it highlights that even if one has no higher-order desire against the idea of following the aggressor's instruction when stunned, this does not imply that one would, therefore, identify the preference of submission as not alienating. The desire to *voluntarily* succumb to an aggressor is formed out of the fear of losing one's life, which is something few would identify as their preference. Hence, coerced actions sharing the similar features with the case of under the threat from an aggressor will not be considered as autonomous actions.

Emphasising identification of preference, however, cannot provide us with a complete account of authenticity. Although this account can avoid the aforementioned problem the hierarchical account has, it fails to provide a way out for the case of psychopath in the issue of authenticity. Consider the case of psychopath again. Suppose there is a psychopath P who considers the meaning of his life as killing. He kills because he prefers to kill (fulfilling the first condition). He has the preference of killing because he

identifies and prefers to have it (fulfilling the second condition). And the identification does not from influences he considers alienating for he thinks he was born for killing and killing is the mission of his life (fulfilling the third condition). According DeGrazia's account of autonomy, if the psychopath P really kills, the killing committed by him will be an autonomous action. Nevertheless, we seldom take this sort of action as autonomous because P lacks the ability to *know* that his behaviour seriously violates fundamental moral laws. It seems that both Elliott and DeGrazia neglect the fact that the search of one's genuine desires does not guarantee a solid foundation for a person to have an authentic life. After all, subjective preferences are not the primarily or sole source for us to constitute autonomy and authenticity.

7. Enhancing Rationality as a Way to Fulfill Authenticity

A recent work written by Schaefer, Kahane, and Savulescu provides us with a potential way out to escape from the aforementioned predicament that a psychopath who has no internal conflict among his subjective preference can also be a candidate of fulfilling authenticity. Although Schaefer *et al.*'s argument focuses on the potentiality of enhancing autonomy, their account, nevertheless, brings up a missing element in DeGrazia-Elliott's preference centered view of authenticity: the reasoning ability. They point out that despite the great difference among different theories concerning autonomy or authenticity, to fully fulfill the aim of these theories, reasoning abilities are indispensable. For instance, in the hierarchical account of autonomy, if one wants to know whether or not he is autonomous, he will first have to have the reasoning ability to recognise his higher-order and lower-order desire. A Kantian will have to employ the same ability to distinguish the categorical imperative from hypothetical imperative. Back to the relative novel account of autonomy advocated by DeGrazia, the identification of preference certainly involves this ability for the recognition of alienating influence.

To make it more clear, the problem of DeGrazia's account is not that there's no role for the reasoning ability to play at all, but that the reasoning ability is used only for identification of preference. The preference-identification account misses the fact that reasoning abilities are more important than preference in when we are about to determine whether one has autonomy or not. We seldom consider people under

the influence of brainwashing to be autonomous because their voluntary cooperation with the government without any resentment towards the ruling party is often due to their lack of logical competence, comprehension, and abilities of doing critical analysis. Under such circumstance, many would not notice that their subjective preferences could be based on false beliefs and could also contradict objective truth.

To seek authenticity, one cannot just follow her personal preference. The reasoning abilities that could provide guidance for one to have self-correcting are also crucial. As the case of the psychopath shows plainly, it is dubious for anyone to claim that once the desire to conduct an action is not formed by an alienating influence, the action shall be regarded as autonomous. One has to be equipped with sufficient reasoning abilities to facilitate her not just to identify her personal preference out of numerous noises made by the surrounding, but also further test the preference with rigid logical analysis. Traditional enhancement such as courses that aim to promote people's critical thinking and increase their sensitivity to logical fallacies could help people to discover flaws in their reasoning, hence garnering better resistance against social coercion. Chemicals that can improve one's cognitive function can also be seen as beneficial for one to achieve authenticity. People with depression, for instance, often lose their reasoning abilities and become irrationally pessimistic about themselves. The overwhelming negative emotion often impedes the depression sufferers from being aware that they are viewing their current situation with contradictory ideas. In this situation, even Prozac could be seen as an enhancement that helps one improve one's reasoning abilities so as to conceive a plan to seek authenticity.

8. Conclusion

The paper has shown that Elliott's identity argument has several problems that are difficult to be overcome. A better strategy for Elliott to adopt is to abandon his identity argument and focus on the issue of social coercion, which leads to a convergence of his self-discovery and DeGrazia's self-creation account. The paper also shows that neither Elliott nor DeGrazia notices the importance rationality plays in autonomy and authenticity. The key to alleviate the problem of social coercion is not just about listening to the inner voice or identifying the preferences, but about how

to use and improve our reasoning abilities to help us critically examine the external world and the internal voice.

References

- Bolt, L. (2007). True to oneself? Broad and narrow ideas on authenticity in the enhancement debate. *Theoretical medicine and bioethics*, 28(4), 285-300.
- Boorse, C. (1977). Health as a theoretical concept. *Philosophy Of Science*, 44(4), 542-573.
- Buchanan, A. (2009). Human nature and enhancement. *Bioethics*, 23(3), 141-150. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8519.2008.00633.x
- Chen, M. K. (2013). The effect of language on economic behavior: Evidence from savings rates, health behaviors, and retirement assets. *The American Economic Review*, 103(2), 690-731.
- Chen, Q.-H., Ge, R.-L., Wang, X.-Z., Chen, H.-X., Wu, T.-Y., Kobayashi, T., & Yoshimura, K. (1997). Exercise performance of Tibetan and Han adolescents at altitudes of 3,417 and 4,300 m. *Journal of Applied Physiology*, 83(2), 661-667.
- DeGrazia, D. (2000). Prozac, Enhancement, and Self-Creation. *Hastings Center Report*, 30(2), 34-40.
- DeGrazia, D. (2005). *Human identity and bioethics*: Cambridge University Press.
- Elliott, C. (1998). The tyranny of happiness: Ethics and cosmetic psychopharmacology. In E. Parens (Ed.), *Enhancing human traits: Ethical and social implications* (pp. 177-188).
- Elliott, C. (2000). The Tyranny of Happiness: Ethics and Cosmetic Psychopharmacology. In E. Parens (Ed.), *Enhancing human traits: Ethical and social implications*: Georgetown University Press.
- Elliott, C. (2004). *Better than well: American medicine meets the American dream*: WW Norton & Company.
- Erzurum, S., Ghosh, S., Janocha, A., Xu, W., Bauer, S., Bryan, N., . . . Stuehr, D. (2007). Higher blood flow and circulating NO products offset high-altitude hypoxia among Tibetans. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 104(45), 17593-17598.
- Fukuyama, F. (2002). *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnological Revolution*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Hull, D. L. (1986). *On human nature*. Paper presented at the PSA: Proceedings of the biennial meeting of the philosophy of science association.
- Kingma, E. (2007). What is it to be healthy? *Analysis*, 67(294), 128-133.
- Levy, N. (2011). Enhancing authenticity. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 28(3), 308-318.
- Lewens, T. (2012). Human Nature: The Very Idea. *Philosophy & Technology*, 25(4), 459-474. doi: 10.1007/s13347-012-0063-x
- Parens, E. (2000). *Enhancing human traits: Ethical and social implications*: Georgetown University Press.
- Sandel, M. (2007). *The Case against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Schlaug, G., Norton, A., Overy, K., & Winner, E. (2005). Effects of music training on the child's brain and cognitive development. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1060(1), 219-230.

- Simonson, T. S., Yang, Y., Huff, C. D., Yun, H., Qin, G., Witherspoon, D. J., . . . Ge, R. (2010). Genetic Evidence for High-Altitude Adaptation in Tibet. *Science*, 329.
- Su, B., Xiao, C., Deka, R., Seielstad, M. T., Kangwanpong, D., Xiao, J., . . . Chakraborty, R. (2000). Y chromosome haplotypes reveal prehistorical migrations to the Himalayas. *Human genetics*, 107(6), 582-590.
- Taylor, C. (1991). *The Ethics of Authenticity*: Harvard University Press.
- Thalberg, I. (1978). Hierarchical analyses of unfree action. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 8(2), 211-226.

Endnotes

1. For more discussion concerning the difficulty of defining the concept of health/normality with bio-statistic approach, see Boorse (1977) for the idea of bio-statistic theory of health and Kingma (2007) for the difficulties of this approach.
2. Some may be unsatisfied with this sci-fi scenario and argue that even if this scenario could become real in the future, it does not alleviate the unease of the value embodied behind treating people with *drugs*. Parens (2000) points out that even if the final result of different medical interventions is all the same, how we achieve the goal still matters. Treating depression with group therapy or anti-depression may both alleviate one's emotional pain, yet the values underlying the employment of the two vary greatly—using anti-depressants as a solution to emotional pain could presume that human is no more than a relatively complex machine. The discomfort of seeing humans as complex machines is understandable, but it could hardly be served as a supporting argument for Elliott. The point of Parens' argument is about how we should see human beings, whereas Elliott's original argument concerns more about the change an intervention is going to introduce, not about the values embedded in the intervention.
3. One can find similar point in Elliott's own words. In the chapter entitled as 'The True Voice,' he told his readers he was uneasy about the idea of voice training course until he found that some of the courses were not aiming to promote the idea that certain accents are *better* than the other but to help male-to-female transsexuals to acquire the voices they would otherwise have if they were born to be females. Elliott seemed to be more sympathetic to this sort of attempt than to the attempt of changing the shape of nose sought by many Jewish people. The difference of his attitude could result from that he regards the former as listening to the true voice while the later conformity to the majority (Elliott, 2004, pp. 188-190).